



Evaluation of the Research and Technology Implementation Gap: A Literature Review of the Impact of Innovation on Community Welfare

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Abstract

Innovation plays a crucial role in improving community welfare by enhancing economic productivity, expanding access to essential services, and fostering social development. However, despite the growing body of research on innovation, a significant gap remains between research outcomes and their practical implementation. This study specifically aims to identify the lack of context-specific implementation frameworks in developing countries. The study synthesizes findings from various academic sources to identify key themes, including the impact of technological and social innovation, barriers to implementation, and strategies to bridge the gap between research and practice. The synthesis of 35 selected studies indicates that while innovation has strong potential to improve welfare, its effectiveness is often limited by factors such as inadequate infrastructure, low technological literacy, lack of institutional support, and misalignment between research outputs and real-world needs. Additionally, implementation challenges arise from organizational resistance, policy constraints, and insufficient collaboration among stakeholders. The findings also highlight that successful innovation implementation requires an integrated approach involving multiple actors, including governments, academia, industry, and communities. Strategies such as strengthening collaboration, promoting evidence-based policymaking, enhancing community capacity, and developing adaptive evaluation frameworks are essential to ensure that innovation can be effectively translated into practice. In conclusion, bridging the research–implementation gap is critical to maximizing the benefits of innovation for community welfare. Future research should focus on developing practical frameworks and context-specific strategies to support sustainable innovation adoption and implementation.

Keywords: Innovation, community welfare, technology implementation, social innovation, research gap

1. Introduction

The development of technological innovation in recent decades has become a major driver of social and economic change in various parts of the world. While innovation is often framed as a tool for efficiency, some studies argue its benefits are unevenly distributed but also as a strategic instrument for improving societal well-being, particularly in developing countries. In this context, the relationship between innovation and social well-being has become increasingly complex and multidimensional, requiring a comprehensive analytical approach to fully understand its impact (Castellacci, 2023).

However, despite the rapid growth of innovation-related research, a significant gap remains between research findings and the implementation of technology in the field. Many innovations, while theoretically possessing significant potential for improving societal well-being, fail to achieve widespread adoption due to various structural, social, and institutional barriers. This phenomenon is known as the ‘research and implementation gap’, which refers to the delay or failure in translating research findings into practical and scalable real-world applications. (Borg et al., 2023).

Previous studies have shown that the implementation of well-being technologies often faces various obstacles, such as limited infrastructure, lack of user competency, and resistance to change. Furthermore, policy and regulatory factors also play a crucial role in determining the successful adoption of these technologies. Zander et al. (2023) emphasize that successful implementation is heavily influenced by organizational support, adequate training, and stakeholder engagement.

On the other hand, technological innovation has significant potential to reduce economic disparities and improve access to basic services for poor communities. Technology can expand access to education, health care, and other public services, thus directly contributing to improved welfare. Fariz and Issalillah (2021) demonstrate that technological innovation can narrow economic disparities by increasing the accessibility and efficiency of services.

Furthermore, in the context of developing countries, the use of technology also plays a crucial role in bridging the innovation policy gap. Eze et al. (2024) revealed that technology can improve the quality of public services and strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. This demonstrates that innovation impacts not only the economic aspect but also governance and democracy.

In addition to technological innovation, social innovation is also a crucial factor in improving public welfare. Social innovation focuses on solutions oriented to community needs and often involves cross-sector collaboration. Mildemberger et al. (2020) state that social innovation has a significant impact on social change, although evaluating its impact remains a challenge. This is reinforced by Nazari et al. (2024) who highlight the importance of developing more comprehensive evaluation methods to measure the impact of social innovation.

In the context of implementation, civic technology also plays a crucial role in driving social innovation. Saldivar et al. (2019) demonstrate that this technology can enhance collaboration between government and citizens, as well as strengthen transparency and accountability. However, its effectiveness is highly dependent on the level of digital literacy and infrastructure readiness in each region.

Furthermore, the implementation of service innovation is a key factor in ensuring that innovations truly have a tangible impact on society. Singh et al. (2020) emphasize that the success of service innovation depends not only on the innovation design but also on an effective implementation strategy. This includes managerial, organizational, and cultural aspects that support innovation adoption.

The role of educational institutions, particularly universities, cannot be overlooked in the innovation ecosystem. Bayuo et al. (2020) explain that universities act as agents of change in the development and dissemination of social innovation. They not only generate knowledge but also contribute to the implementation process through collaboration with various stakeholders.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that although innovation has great potential to improve societal welfare, there is a significant gap between technology research and implementation. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate this gap through a literature review approach, as well as identify factors that influence the success of implementing innovation in improving community welfare.

2. Literature Review

Literature reviews on the relationship between innovation, technology, and public welfare have shown significant developments in recent years. Innovation is no longer understood solely as a technical process, but also as a social phenomenon involving interactions between various actors, institutions, and policy contexts. Castellacci (2023) emphasizes that innovation has a multidisciplinary dimension encompassing economic, social, and institutional aspects, therefore, analyzing its impact on public welfare requires a holistic approach.

In the context of social innovation, the primary focus lies on creating solutions that directly address community needs. Mildemberger et al. (2020) explain that social innovation contributes to social change by improving the quality of life, although measuring its impact remains challenging due to the complexity of the indicators used. This is in line with Nazari et al. (2024), who developed a mapping tool for evaluating the impact of social innovation and highlighted the need for a more systematic and standardized evaluation framework.

The development of digital technology has also encouraged the emergence of the concept of civic technology as part of social innovation. Saldivar et al. (2019) demonstrate that this technology enables more effective collaboration between government and citizens, particularly in increasing transparency, public participation, and service efficiency. However, the success of its implementation depends heavily on the readiness of digital infrastructure and the level of public literacy.

From an economic perspective, technological innovation has been shown to play a crucial role in reducing social disparities and improving the welfare of vulnerable groups. Fariz and Issalillah (2021) found that technological innovation can expand access to economic resources and public services, thereby helping improve the lives of the poor. This finding suggests that innovation has the potential to be an effective tool for social redistribution.

However, various studies also point to a gap between innovation development and its implementation on the ground. Borg et al. (2023) identified a lack of knowledge regarding how welfare technology can be implemented effectively. Furthermore, Zander et al. (2023) revealed that inhibiting factors such as user resistance, limited resources, and lack of organizational support are often major obstacles to the implementation process.

In the context of developing countries, this gap is further compounded by limited infrastructure and policies that do not optimally support innovation. Eze et al. (2024) emphasized that technology can act as a bridge to address the innovation-policy gap, particularly in improving the quality of public services and public participation. However, without strong policy support, this potential is difficult to fully realize.

Furthermore, the implementation of service innovation has also become a significant focus in the literature. Singh et al. (2020) state that the success of service innovation is determined not only by the quality of the innovation itself

but also by the implementation strategy, which involves various organizational and management aspects. This suggests that an implementation approach must be an integral part of the innovation process.

The role of educational institutions, particularly universities, is also a concern in the development of social innovation. Bayuo et al. (2020) highlight that universities have a strategic role in creating, developing, and disseminating innovation. Through collaboration with the government and the private sector, universities can accelerate the adoption of innovations and increase their impact on society. Overall, this literature review shows that while innovation has great potential to improve societal well-being, various challenges remain in its implementation. The gap between research and practice is a key issue that needs to be addressed through a more integrated, collaborative, and evidence-based approach. Therefore, further research is needed that focuses not only on innovation development but also on effective and sustainable implementation strategies.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Materials

This research uses a literature review approach, with the object of study being various scientific publications discussing the relationship between technological innovation, social innovation, and social welfare, as well as the gap between research and implementation. The data used is secondary data obtained from reputable international journal articles, proceedings, and other scientific publications relevant to the research topic. The primary data sources include academic databases such as Scopus and Scholar, selected based on their credibility and relevance to the research theme.

The data scope focuses on research discussing innovation implementation, the impact of technology on social welfare, and factors influencing the success or failure of innovation adoption. Furthermore, literature examining the gap between research and practice (research-implementation gap) is also an important part of the data collection. This aligns with the finding that there are still limitations in understanding the sustainability factors and implementation of innovation in the real world. During the data collection process, keywords such as innovation, technology implementation, social innovation, welfare impact, and implementation gap were used.

3.2. Methods

The method used in this research is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), designed in a structured manner to identify, evaluate, and synthesize various studies related to the gap between innovation research and technology implementation in improving public welfare. This approach was chosen because it can provide a comprehensive, evidence-based understanding of complex and multidimensional phenomena.

The first stage is literature identification, which is the process of searching for scientific articles using relevant keywords such as innovation, technology implementation, social innovation, and welfare impact. Searches are conducted in reputable databases Scopus and Web of Science, complemented by Google Scholar for grey literature to obtain credible and relevant sources. The initial search results are then compiled as the initial research data set. The second stage is screening, out of 120 initial articles, 45 were excluded during screening where collected articles are selected based on their titles and abstracts. The goal is to ensure that only research relevant to the topic is subjected to further analysis. Irrelevant or duplicate articles are eliminated at this stage.

The third stage is eligibility, which is an in-depth evaluation of the content of articles that have passed the screening stage. At this stage, articles are assessed based on inclusion criteria such as topic suitability, publication quality, and contribution to innovation and public welfare studies. Articles that do not meet the criteria will be excluded from the analysis. The fourth stage is data extraction, which is the process of extracting essential information from each selected article. The information collected includes the research objectives, methods used, key results, and factors influencing innovation implementation. This data is then systematically organized to facilitate the analysis process.

The fifth stage is analysis and synthesis, which uses a thematic approach. At this stage, the extracted data is grouped into several main themes, such as the impact of innovation on well-being, barriers to implementation, and strategies for bridging the gap between research and practice. This synthesis process allows researchers to identify patterns and relationships between variables in greater depth. The final stage is interpretation and reporting of the results, where all findings are critically analyzed to produce conclusions relevant to the research objectives. Furthermore, this stage also formulates recommendations for further research and provides practical implications for developing more effective and sustainable innovations.

To clarify the research methodology, these stages are visualized in the form of a flowchart, as shown in Figure 1. This diagram systematically depicts the research process, from literature identification to interpretation of results, in accordance with the diagram writing format used in journal templates.

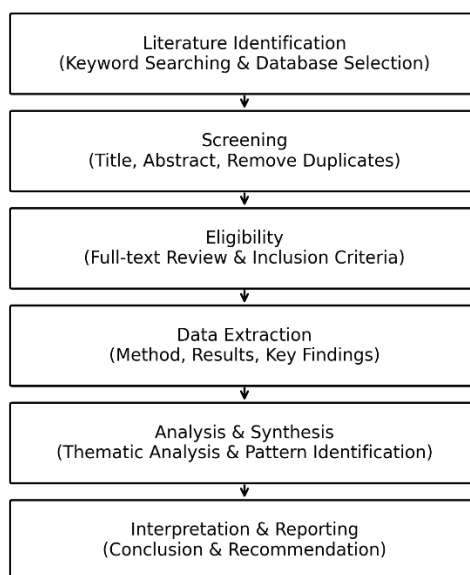


Figure 1: research methodology flowchart

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Impact of Innovation on Community Welfare

A literature analysis shows that innovation, both technological and social, consistently reported to contribute to improving community welfare. Innovation acts as a catalyst in driving economic growth, increasing productivity, and expanding access to basic services such as education, health, and finance. In this context, innovation not only impacts income growth but also improves the overall quality of life.

While most studies report positive impacts, some highlight limited effects in low-infrastructure settings, such as service digitization and financial innovation, can increase economic inclusion and strengthen community productivity. For example, Suarmanayasa et al. (2025) demonstrated that microfinance innovations have been shown to expand access to financial services for rural communities, thereby encouraging entrepreneurial activity, income diversification, and improving household welfare. Furthermore, Suarmanayasa et al. (2026) also explained that access to financial innovation has also been shown to significantly improve welfare indicators, particularly in areas with limited economic access.

Furthermore, social innovation also plays a crucial role in improving community welfare, particularly within the context of local communities. Social innovation enables the creation of more adaptive solutions to community needs, such as increasing community participation, strengthening local institutions, and creating new economic opportunities. Barlagne et al. (2021) show that social innovation can have positive impacts across various dimensions, including economic, social, environmental, and governance.

Furthermore, innovation also contributes to community empowerment through increased capacity and active participation in development. Community-based innovation can increase community involvement in decision-making processes and strengthen social capital. This ultimately contributes to more inclusive and sustainable development.

However, the impact of innovation on well-being is not always evenly distributed across all regions. Several studies indicate that the success of innovation is highly dependent on contextual factors such as infrastructure availability, education levels, and policy support. In rural areas, for example, Sofianto (2020) showed that limited access to technology and low digital literacy are major obstacles to maximizing the benefits of innovation. These research findings confirm that innovation plays a strategic role in improving community well-being. However, to achieve optimal impact, an integrated approach between technological innovation, social innovation, and adequate policy support is required. Without this integration, the potential for innovation to improve community welfare cannot be utilized optimally.

4.2. Research–Implementation Gap in Technology Adoption

One of the key findings of this study is the significant gap between innovation research findings and their real-world implementation. Although numerous studies have demonstrated the significant potential of innovations to improve societal well-being, many innovations fail to achieve widespread or sustained adoption. This gap demonstrates that the success of innovation depends not only on technological development but also on the ability of social and organizational systems to implement it effectively.

The literature demonstrates that innovation adoption is a complex and multi-step process, involving various individual, organizational, and environmental factors. In innovation diffusion theory, this process encompasses stages ranging from understanding, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. However, in practice, many innovations fail to progress past the implementation stage due to barriers at various system levels (Ediriweera & Wiewiora, 2021).

One of the main causes of this gap is the lack of integration between academic research and practical needs in the field. Much research focuses on developing new models or technologies without considering the implementation context, such as user readiness, organizational conditions, and the policy environment. As a result, the resulting innovations often do not align with the real needs of society or are difficult to adopt widely.

Furthermore, various studies have identified that implementation barriers are not only technical but also encompass social and institutional aspects. Factors such as limited resources, lack of training, unsupportive organizational culture, and low user motivation are key barriers to innovation adoption. In fact, in some cases, the main barriers stem from non-technical factors such as organizational structure and governance (Thijssen et al., 2021).

This gap is even more complex in developing countries, where limited infrastructure, immature regulations, and low technological literacy exacerbate implementation barriers. Garrett et al. (2006) show that factors such as cost, risk, and limited access to resources are key obstacles to technology adoption across various sectors. This results in innovations that could improve public welfare not being optimally utilized.

Furthermore, the literature also highlights the significant time lag between innovation development and implementation. In some cases, it can take years for an innovation to achieve widespread adoption, indicating inefficiencies in the translation process from research to practice. This situation underscores the importance of a more integrated approach between research, policy, and implementation. The results of this study indicate that the research-implementation gap is a crucial issue in innovation studies. Addressing this gap requires an approach that focuses not only on technology development but also on implementation strategies that consider contextual factors, collaboration between stakeholders, and system readiness to adopt innovation sustainably.

4.3. Barriers and Challenges in Innovation Implementation

The literature analysis shows that one of the main causes of the gap between research and innovation implementation is the existence of various multidimensional barriers that affect the technology adoption process. These barriers are not only technical but also encompass social, organizational, economic, and policy aspects, making innovation implementation a complex and non-linear process.

From an individual perspective, resistance to change is a major challenge in innovation adoption. Users often express hesitation toward new technologies due to a lack of understanding, limited digital skills, and high perceptions of risk. This condition leads to low levels of technology acceptance, even though the innovation has significant potential benefits. In this context, technological literacy and training are key factors in increasing user readiness.

At the organizational level, key barriers include limited resources, lack of managerial support, and an organizational culture that is not adaptive to change. Many institutions lack systems that support the integration of innovation into daily operations, often hindering or unsustaining implementation. Furthermore, a lack of coordination between stakeholders also slows down the innovation adoption process.

From a systems and policy perspective, regulatory inconsistencies and a lack of policy support are significant inhibiting factors. Innovation often develops faster than the regulations that govern it, creating uncertainty in implementation. This is particularly true in developing countries, where innovation policy frameworks are not yet fully developed and unable to accommodate dynamic technological developments.

Furthermore, limited infrastructure is a major challenge to innovation implementation, particularly in regions with low technology access. Inadequate infrastructure, such as limited internet access or uneven technological facilities, hinders the widespread distribution and utilization of innovation. This situation creates a digital divide, which ultimately impacts inequality in societal welfare.

This discussion aligns with the principles of writing the discussion section, which emphasize the importance of critically interpreting research findings by linking them to the broader context and influencing factors (Lewis et al., 2021; Irawati, 2022). Therefore, analyzing implementation barriers aims not only to identify problems but also to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of innovation adoption in real-world practice.

Overall, these findings indicate that the success of innovation implementation depends heavily on the readiness of the ecosystem, encompassing individuals, organizations, and the policy system. Without synergy between these components, innovations produced through research will not be able to provide optimal impact on improving community welfare.

4.4. Strategies to Bridge the Gap and Enhance Welfare Outcomes

Based on the literature analysis, a comprehensive and integrated strategy is needed to bridge the gap between research and innovation implementation. One key approach is the application of implementation science, which focuses on how research findings can be effectively translated into real-world practice. This approach emphasizes the

importance of understanding the innovation adoption process, including contextual factors, the actors involved, and implementation mechanisms appropriate to field conditions (Larsson, 2024).

The first strategy is strengthening collaboration among stakeholders, including academia, government, the private sector, and the community. This collaboration enables co-creation, where innovations are developed based on the real needs of users. This approach has been proven to increase the relevance of research and accelerate the adoption of innovations in practice (Gossa et al., 2015). Furthermore, collaboration also plays a role in strengthening knowledge transfer and narrowing the gap between theory and practice.

The second strategy is the development of evidence-based policies. Policies designed based on valid research results can increase the effectiveness of innovation implementation. Analysis of the gap between policy and implementation shows that an evidence-based approach can help identify enabling and inhibiting factors, resulting in more adaptive and targeted policies (Siagian & Ayuningtyas, 2019).

The third strategy is improving the technological capacity and literacy of the community. Many innovations fail to be implemented due to low user understanding and skills. Therefore, training, education, and improving digital literacy are crucial steps to ensure that communities are able to optimally adopt and utilize innovations. Furthermore, a culture-based approach is necessary to adapt innovations to local contexts and avoid resistance (Fehlberg et al., 2025).

The fourth strategy is strengthening the innovation infrastructure and ecosystem. Adequate infrastructure, such as internet access, technology support systems, and sustainable funding, are key prerequisites for innovation implementation. Without strong ecosystem support, innovations resulting from research will not be widely implemented. Furthermore, integration between research, industry, and policy systems is also necessary to create a sustainable innovation ecosystem.

The fifth strategy is developing an adaptive evaluation and monitoring model. Continuous evaluation allows for early identification of implementation barriers and necessary strategy adjustments. The literature shows that there is still a need for more flexible and contextual evaluation models, especially in measuring the impact of innovation on societal welfare (Borg et al., 2023).

5. Conclusion

This study has systematically examined the gap between innovation research and its practical implementation, particularly in the context of improving community welfare. Through a structured literature review, the findings reveal that innovation both technological and social plays a significant role in enhancing economic productivity, expanding access to essential services, and improving overall quality of life. However, despite its substantial potential, the impact of innovation is often not fully realized due to various challenges in the implementation process.

The analysis highlights the existence of a significant research implementation gap, where many innovations fail to be adopted or sustained in real-world contexts. This gap is influenced by multiple factors, including limited infrastructure, low technological literacy, weak policy support, and lack of alignment between research outputs and societal needs. Additionally, organizational and institutional barriers, such as insufficient resources and resistance to change, further hinder effective implementation.

Furthermore, the study identifies that innovation implementation is a complex and multidimensional process requiring the readiness of an entire ecosystem, including individuals, organizations, and policy frameworks. Without strong integration among these elements, innovations developed through research will struggle to deliver meaningful and sustainable impacts on community welfare. To address these challenges, the study emphasizes the importance of adopting comprehensive strategies, including strengthening stakeholder collaboration, developing evidence-based policies, enhancing community capacity, improving infrastructure, and implementing adaptive evaluation mechanisms. These approaches are essential to ensure that innovation is not only created but also effectively implemented and sustained.

In conclusion, bridging the gap between research and implementation is crucial for maximizing the potential of innovation in improving community welfare. Future research should focus on developing more practical implementation frameworks and context-specific strategies that can accelerate the translation of innovation into real-world benefits.

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